

What Soldiers Miss Most

Kate Crawford is a senior at Meridian High School. Her parents are Bill and Lynn Crawford and she has an older brother who is attending the University of Mississippi. Kate's family attends Church of the Mediator, where she is active in the youth group. She hasn't decided what career she might like to pursue, but she wants to attend college at either Ole Miss or Mississippi State University.

Here's what inspired Kate's poem: "I chose this subject because the number of answers are limitless. I tried to imagine what I would miss most about home and put it in a male soldier's point of view."

She was a reporter,
With long flowing hair,
Moving amongst the soldiers,
Going here and there.

Finally a soldier did ask,
"For whom do you seek?"
The lady simply answered,
"A soldier with whom I can speak."

"I will speak with you,
As long as your questions do not intrude
Upon my actions
In servitude."

The reporter flashed a smile,
Reached into her pack and said,
"This might take a while
But people will love it once it's been read."

She asked him the usual questions,
Of name, office and rank.
And even asked about
Hummers, RVs and tanks.

But then the subject turned,
To questions about home.
The soldier's voice changed,
His eyes began to roam.

He answered with a small smile,
And his eyes misted.
He was caught in the reporter's snare,
And with one last question he persisted.

The reporter asked gently,
"What do you miss most?"
To which the soldier replied,
"I miss waffles and toast.
Home-cooked meals,
And seeing my wife,
In her dressy high-heels.



PHOTO BY PAULA MERRITT / THE MERIDIAN STAR

THE REPORTER AND THE SOLDIER

This photo illustration recreates an imagined conversation between Kate Crawford, in the role of a newspaper reporter, and a soldier serving in Iraq. What would someone far from home miss the most, she asked herself. This poem is her answer.

"I miss my daughter and son,
My house and my car.
I miss my dog and my cat,
My favorite bar.

"I miss watching cartoons,
And mowing the lawn.
I miss going to the grocery store,
And buying some Dawn.

"I miss driving downtown,
And the smell of the trees.
But what I miss most,
Is none of these."

The reporter was spellbound,
And leaned in intently,
Wanting to hear,
What he missed so greatly.

He said softly,
As his eyes shone,
"What I miss most, dear lady,
Is home."

— Kate Crawford

SPEAK UP

Here's how these people answered the question, "If you were away fighting a war, what do you think you would miss most about home?"

"I feel the thing I would miss the most is being able to do what I wanted to do at all times. If I was overseas fighting, I couldn't do what I wanted to do."

Angel Mays, 17
Meridian

"Hearing the voices of my family and those I am close to."

Ashley Young, 15
Meridian

"My family. My family and my friends. Friends are important."

Magen Horn, 14
Livingston, Ala.

"I would miss the comfort of home."

Michael Douglas, 22
Livingston, Ala.

"I would miss my family and old traditions."

Lindsay Dearman, 15
Meridian

Trisha Rainer compiled this Speak Up question. She is a sophomore at Southeast Lauderdale High School. Trisha lives in Toomsaba with her parents, Rodney and Wanda Rainer. She wants to pursue a career as a photographer and psychologist. Here's how she answered her own question: "There are many things I would miss, but most of all, I'd miss my family — especially my niece, Alana Nichole."



ILLUSTRATION BY LYNNZIE WARREN

ALL THE LITTLE THINGS

Lynnzie Warren is a sophomore at West Lauderdale High School. After graduation, she hopes to attend a design school. Here's what Lynnzie said about her drawing: "My artwork represents many things. I've shown in my artwork that soldiers not only miss the big things, like their families and love, but also the smallest things like Cokes and McDonald's. All the other designs and swirls represent the long nights and all the times the soldiers have taken out of their lives to be overseas fighting for our country."



Warren

Read about how Morgan Boothe **REDISCOVERED HER FATHER** during a chance encounter at Northeast Lauderdale High School in the Sports and Recreation section of "Profile 2005: A Letter from Home."

